

## NEW DESCRIPTIONS

A NEW SPECIES OF *VACCINIUM* L. (ERICACEAE) FROM INDIA<sup>1</sup>S. PANDA<sup>2,3</sup> & M. SANJAPPA<sup>2,4</sup><sup>1</sup>Accepted October 03, 2006<sup>2</sup>Botanical Survey of India, CGO Complex, 3<sup>rd</sup> MSO Building, Block-F, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sector I, Salt Lake City, Kolkata 700 064, West Bengal, India.<sup>3</sup>Present address: P.G Department of Botany, Barasat Government College, Barasat 700 124, North 24 – Parganas, West Bengal, India. Email: subhaeri@yahoo.com<sup>4</sup>Email: m.sanjappa@nic.in

*Vaccinium myodianum* Panda & Sanjappa (Ericaceae) is described as new from Dibang Valley district of Arunachal Pradesh in India. The new species is also provided with illustration and probable affinities of its close allies.

**Key words:** *Vaccinium myodianum* sp. nov., Ericaceae, Dibang Valley district, Arunachal Pradesh

## INTRODUCTION

The genus *Vaccinium* L. consists of about 450 species (Mabberley 1997), distributed in tropical Asia, Europe, south-eastern Africa, Madagascar and America. Of these, about 28 species are reported to occur in India (Panda 2006), distributed in the eastern Himalaya, north-eastern India (except Tripura) and hill tops of south-western Ghats.

Sleumer (1941) reported 33 sections in the genus, of which the Indian taxa represent six sections, namely *Galeopetalum* (J.J. Sm.) Sleumer, *Cyanophthalmos* Sleumer, *Vitis-idaea* (Moench) W.D.J. Koch, *Bracteata* Nakai, *Epigynium* (Klotzsch) Hook. f. and *Eococcus* Sleumer. Airy Shaw (1948) included a seventh section, *Aethopus* Airy Shaw. The new species described below clearly falls in the section *Epigynium* (Klotzsch) Hook. f., mainly on account of the lenticillate stem and branches beset with lanceolate scales up to 5 mm long, lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate glabrous leaves, perulate racemes and spurless anthers.

As a result of revisionary work on the Family Ericaceae in India under 'Flora of India Project', several field trips to the eastern Himalaya and north-eastern India and herbarium visits to several Indian herbaria were made. During a herbarium visit to Arunachal Field Station (ARUN) under the Botanical Survey of India, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh (December 2002), an interesting specimen of a species of *Vaccinium* L. was consulted. A critical study of this specimen revealed that it is new to science and is described and illustrated here.

*Vaccinium myodianum* Panda & Sanjappa, sp. nov.

Fig. 1

Species nova *Vaccinium venosum* Wight valde affinis, sed foliis lanceolatis vel oblong-lanceolatis, rhachidibus 25-35 mm longis, bracteis majoribus (c. 6 x 3 mm), lobis calycis acuminatis et antherae thecis glabris differt, et a

*V. subdissitifolium* P.F. Stevens differt ramulis glabris, foliis lanceolatis vel oblong-lanceolatis, basi anguste cuneatis, non rotundatis, lobis calycis acuminatis, corollis intus densissime pilosis et antherae thecis glabris.

**Typus:** INDIA: Arunachal Pradesh, Dibang Valley district, 10 km from Tewarygram, near Myodia, 2.ii.1988, S.K. Das 2985 (holotype: ARUN!).

Stout, erect shrub to treelet, up to 9 m high. Stem terete, profusely branched, lenticillate, glabrous, often covered with lanceolate scales up to 5 mm long; branches and twigs terete, glabrous. Leaves alternate, chartaceo-coriaceous, lamina lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate, 70-120 x 12-23 mm, serrate at margin, narrowly cuneate at base, acuminate at apex, glabrous; venation brochidodromous with 8-10 pairs lateral nerves, obscure above, conspicuous beneath; petioles 1-2 mm long, glabrous. Racemes axillary or pseudoterminal, perulate; rachis 25-35 mm long, 20-24-flowered, glabrous. Flowers 7-9 mm long; pedicels 3-4 mm long, glabrous; bract 1, basal, broadly ovate, c. 6 x 3 mm, ciliate at margin, shortly acuminate at apex, glabrous; bracteoles 2, opposite, basal, ovate-elliptic, c. 2 x 1 mm, ciliate at margin toward upper half, long acuminate at apex, glabrous. Calyx lobes broadly ovate, c. 1 x 0.5 mm, entire at margin, acuminate at apex, glabrous. Corolla urceolate, c. 4 x 2 mm, glabrous outside, densely pilose inside, lobes ovate, minute. Stamens 10, c. 4 mm long; filaments c. 1 mm long, slender, glabrous, dilated at base; anther lobes c. 1 mm long, glabrous except spinuous margin, each lobe with c. 2 mm long single tubule. Pistil c. 6.5 mm long; ovary subglobose, c. 2 x 1.5 mm, glabrous, ovules 6-8 on axile placenta in each locule; disc obscure; style c. 4.5 mm long, slender, glabrous. Fruits not seen.

**Distribution:** INDIA: eastern Himalaya (Arunachal Pradesh).

**Flowering:** February.

**Etymology:** This species is named after its type locality.

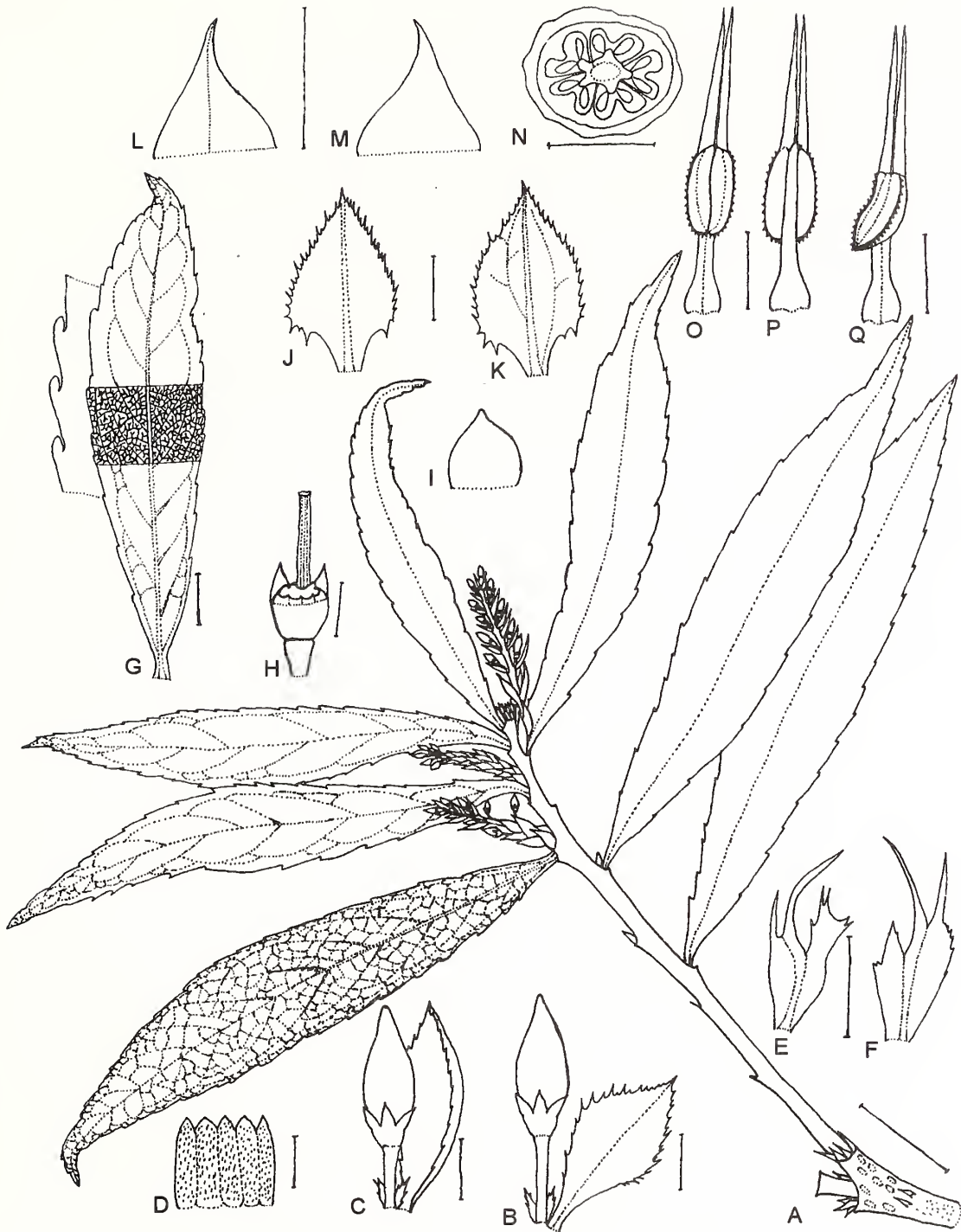


Fig. 1: *Vaccinium myodianum* Panda & Sanjappa, sp. nov.

A. Habit; B - C. Flower buds; D. Corolla split open; E - F. Bracteoles; G. Abaxial leaf; H. Pistil;  
I. Corolla lobe; J - K. Bracts; L - M. Calyx lobes; N. Ovary (t.s.); O - Q. Stamens.

Scale bars: A = 2 cm; B - D, H = 2 mm; E - F, J - Q = 1 mm; G = 1 cm (A - Q: drawn from S.K. Das 2985)

**DISCUSSION**

*Vaccinium myodianum* is closely related to *V. venosum* Wight, a Sino-Himalayan species, from which it differs in having lanceolate or oblong-lanceolate leaf blades, short

racemes (25-35 mm long), larger bract (c. 6 x 3 mm), acuminate calyx lobes and glabrous anther lobes. By contrast, *V. venosum* showed elliptic-oblong leaf blades, comparatively longer racemes (65-75 mm long), smaller bract (c. 2 x 1 mm), acute calyx lobes and granular anther lobes. *V. myodianum*

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is also allied to another Sino-Himalayan species, *V. subdissitifolium* P.F. Stevens, but differs from it in having glabrous branches, lanceolate or oblong-lanceolate leaf blades, narrowly cuneate leaf-base, acuminate calyx lobes, densely pilose corolla inside and glabrous anthers. By contrast, *V. subdissitifolium* showed usually densely setose branches, oblong, obovate to ovate leaf blades, broadly to

narrowly rounded leaf-base, acute calyx lobes, glabrous corolla and granular anthers.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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